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GUIDE

TO

RAMBLES

FROM THE

Catskill Mountain House.

BY A VISITOR.

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CATSKILL:  
J. JOESBURY BOOK & JOB PRINTER.  
1863.

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A visitor to the CATSKILL MOUNTAIN HOUSE has hastily drawn up the following as a guide for strangers in their rambles.

**NORTH MOUNTAIN.**

Take the road from the House leading down the Mountain: at the first turn in the road leading east, immediately on a ledge of rocks fronting east, take the more easterly path. Along this path you will have a more northerly view than can be had at any other part of the mountain.

After passing some three-quarters of a mile northward, an abrupt rock rises directly in front of the path; take the more northerly path, and from the summit of this rock a fine view can be had of both lakes—Round Top and High Peak. On the north side of this rock, a fine *echo* can be had; four distinct reverberations can be heard. Going still further north, you come to an abrupt precipice, which is ascended by a ladder. At this point a large cavern will be found, known as the BEAR'S

DEN. Old hunters say that it was the winter resting and gathering place for the bears.

After ascending the ladder, a still more northerly view can be had.

The *Adirondacks*, *Green Mountains*, *Greene County* and portions of *Schoharie* and *Albany* can be seen. At this point, the cities of *Albany* and *Troy* can be seen with a telescope. The ledges facing the east are abrupt and precipitous.

### HEAD OF THE NORTH LAKE.

At the point at which you leave the road down the mountain for the North Mountain, take the westerly path. You will have a delightful ramble, a portion of the way, along the eastern shore of the North Lake.

### SOUTH MOUNTAIN.

Take the path leading up the South Mountain, directly south of the House.

About two-thirds of the way up the mountain, PUDDING-STONE HALL will be entered. In this vicinity, large masses of pudding-stone will be found. The hall proper is a narrow fissure in the rocks, in which the mass of rock has been separated by the action of frost and water. After ascending from Pudding-Stone Hall, go a short distance east—take a path underneath the ledge westerly. This path passes through a rich collection of lichēn, moss, and fern, past the PORTICO ROCKS, and terminates at FAIRY SPRING. A view of this gem of the mountains compensates for any fatigue that

may be encountered in the ramble. After visiting the Spring, retrace your steps a short distance and turn to the south through a small fissure in the rock, and ascend to the summit of the South Mountain. This pass is known among the mountaineers as the "LEMON SQUEEZER," and, among artists, as the "ELFIN PASS." After attaining the summit, a large boulder to the south will be seen. This is a prominent landmark in this part of the mountain. Your course will be directed for this boulder, from whence the best view of the Cauderskill Clove and the surrounding mountains will be had, and a view more southerly than at any other point. The *Shawangunk range* and the *Minisink Mountains* in New Jersey, and the pass of the *Hudson* in the Highlands, can be seen. The period of the day to visit the North or South Mountain is either about sunrise or in the afternoon. Near this boulder on the South Mountain, along the face of the ledge fronting south, will be found huge masses of rock detached from the face of the ledge by the action of frost and water.

A little to the east of the boulder will be found a fissure in the rock, through which is a pass leading southerly to the precipices overhanging the Clove—a very rough path.

To return, you will go north from the boulder until you make a slight ascent, and then follow the path north near the edge of the ledge until you reach Pudding-Stone Hall. A little to the south of the House, on the face of the ledge, are natural

steps in the face of the rock, by which, with some care, a descent may be made in front of the House.

### **SOUTH LAKE.**

A beautiful view of the South Lake can be had, by leaving the road leading west from the Mountain House about a third of a mile, and turning to the left.

### **NORTH LAKE.**

By taking the road west and leaving it at a short distance before arriving at the junction of the two lakes, turning to the right, the remains of an old road will be found. Follow this road easterly until you make the first descent, and then turn to the north. At this point will be found a large cranberry bed and a very rare plant. The leaf is in the form of a cup, and is always two-thirds filled with water by capillary attraction.

To the north of this lake, to those who have a desire to see mountain life, may be found a Bear Trap, in which Mr. THORP—the “Man of the Mountain”—caught three bears in the Fall of 1857, with the singular bait of dry codfish and honey.

### **THE CAUDERSKILL FALLS.**

There are two foot-paths leading to the Falls—one directly in the rear of the Barns—the other turning to the left after passing the Lakes near the corner of the fence—distance about two miles.

By calling at the office and getting a boat, the

lake can be passed, and a short ramble brings you to the FALLS.

A preferable way is to take the omnibus that leaves the House twice a day, and runs over a good mountain road, giving the passenger a pleasant rural ride, unlike any that can ordinarily be had in the country.

The stream that forms the outlet of the lakes passes over two precipices—the first of a height of one hundred and eighty feet—the second of ninety feet.

The scenery and views at the Falls are unsurpassed. Underneath the first Fall is a path passing directly in the rear of the Fall around an amphitheatre.

At one point the rock projects overhead eighty feet. The amphitheatre is a perfect “whispering gallery.” By following the stream, a rough mountain path will be found, leading to the CAUDERSKILL CLOVE.

### **THE CAUDERSKILL CLOVE**

Lies south of the Mountain House—is a wild gorge in the mountains, running nearly north and south. A good turnpike road leads through it. Abrupt precipices inclose it on every side—some are over two thousand feet. Over one of them two hounds were in such close pursuit of a deer, that in the eagerness of escape and pursuit all leaped the precipice and were lost. In this gorge are several falls—the one at the head of the Clove is well worth a visit. Another, called the “Fawn’s Leap,” will

be found a short distance below the Old Tannery. An old legend is, that a doe made the leap of the chasm over the fall, and that her fawn, in attempting to follow, fell into the deep pool made by the fall, and swam round the pool for two days, the doe remaining near and watching it. Below and above the bridge are also beautiful falls.

### **MOSES' ROCK.**

Descending the road leading down the mountain about three-quarters of a mile, turn to the first path to the right, and follow the old mountain road to the south about the same distance. At this point you reach a large mass of rock, some thirty feet in height by eighty feet in length, covered with moss. A short distance from the base a small stream of water issues from a circular fissure in the rock. A more beautiful spot cannot be found in the mountains, nor cooler and better water.

To a good pedestrian, a beautiful walk will be found from this spot to the foot of the mountain, leading along the old mountain road to the small red house directly below the Mountain House.—From this house take the road leading south until you strike the road leading through the Clove; follow this road until you cross the bridge above the Old Tannery, over the Cauderskill; turn to the right and follow the path along the South Lake to the House.

On the ledge above Moses' Rock, a large tree will be found, marked. From this a new path has been



cut, leading to the precipice overhanging the Clove. From this point a better appreciation of height can be had than at any other point on the mountains.

### **BEAR'S GAP, OR STONEY CLOVE.**

This is some nine miles west of the Mountain House, and is one of the wildest spots in the Catskills. The gorge is a narrow one—the precipices over two thousand feet. Ice can be found in it in July and August; small brook trout are found in the stream passing through it, and with a Minie rifle a shot can be had at an eagle.

### **HIGH PEAK.**

Take the road leading west some five miles, then turn into a road leading south to the south side of the mountain. From this point procure a guide, and from HIGH PEAK one of the most extensive views can be had that will be found in the whole range of mountains. This is the mountain upon which, (agreeably to the Indian tradition,) the "Great Spirit" placed an old squaw and gave her the control of night and day. She had a box, which when she opened it was day, and when she closed it was night. She took down the moon at certain seasons, and cut it up and placed the pieces in the heavens as stars.

High Peak is the barometer for the farmers in the valley of the Hudson. It is a common saying with them, that "When the Old Man of the Mountains puts on his cap, look out for a storm." Near the base of the High Peak, in the early settlement

of the country, there was a place of refuge for the Tories after the burning of Kingston, during the Revolutionary war. They are said to have been guided to the place by an old Indian called Yonton, a compeer of Leather Stocking.

On the return from the High Peak or Stoney Clove, by going to PARKER'S—about a mile north of GRAY'S—a view of the range of mountains, running east and west, can be had, which will well repay any one for the small sacrifice of time.

### **PLATTEKILL CLOVE.**

This gorge in the mountains lies about six miles south of the Cauderskill Clove, and can be reached by either descending the mountain road and passing in front of the house, or by taking the road to the High Peak.

This Clove is well worthy of a visit from any one who has a taste for wild mountain passes. It is unlike the Cauderskill Clove, and in many respects surpasses it in wildness and grandeur. There are several falls in the stream passing through it. This is one of the passes through which the French and Indians are said to have found their way in their attacks upon the early settlers of the valley of the Hudson.

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